

OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN EARL BLUMENAUER

APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM

FISCAL YEAR 2011

Instructions

1. Please complete the entire form. **All fields are required.**
2. Please do not **bold**, underline, or *italicize* responses.
3. Request forms must be submitted as a Word document.
4. All completed request forms and any supplemental materials must be submitted via email to: Appropriations.Blumenauer@mail.house.gov
5. Please do not send more than one request per email.
6. All completed request forms must be submitted no later than **Friday, February 26, 2010.**
7. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your request within 48 hours of submission, please contact Stephanie Cappa in Congressman Blumenauer's Washington, D.C. office at 202-225-4811.

PLEASE NOTE: All appropriations requests submitted to Congressman Blumenauer's office will be made public on his website, as required by the House Committee on Appropriations.

Project Details

1. Project title: "FoodSmart / MoneySmart" Initiative

2. Organization name and address (the recipient of the funds):

Birch Community Services, Inc.

17780 N.E. San Rafael

Portland, OR 97230

3. Contact information

a. Project's primary contact: Suzanne Birch, Executive Director

b. Daytime telephone number/ mobile phone number: 503-251-5431

c. Email Address: suzanne@birchcommunityservices.org

d. Project location (if different than organization's address):

4. Please describe the requesting organization's main activities.

BCS offers two basic programs to serve needy families through (1) a re-distribution program (as noted above) providing an average monthly benefit of about \$590 worth of groceries and other goods per family; and (2) an education program of workshops and multi-session courses in money management, debt reduction, computer skills, household bookkeeping and job-seeking/career counseling. This two-fold approach fosters self-sufficiency in BCS' participant families by first allowing them a way to save precious money resources that would otherwise be spent on crucial staples, and also instructing them in methods that apply those savings to pay down debt, save for a down payment on home or medical bills, or take higher-education courses in order to get a better job. Participant families come to BCS' 22,000-square foot warehouse in NE Portland to pick up food, clothing, and other essential items that have been determined

surplus by over 60 local manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, farms, dairies, bakeries and restaurants. With the money they save on these crucial staples, BCS families are able to pursue goals that move them away from the bankruptcies, evictions and foreclosures that threaten them, and on to financial stability.

Almost all of the facilities within our warehouse were constructed by BCS volunteers, including a two-storey-high cooler, reception/child care area and mezzanine, rest rooms, clean room (for re-packing bulk food into family-sized units), computer lab and meeting room.

BCS serves about 950 families per year who are experiencing, or at risk of, financial crisis. The average participant family consists of two parents and three children. The average household income for these families is \$37,708—about 67% of the median income for a family of 5 in Oregon. BCS also serves over 50 other agencies in the Portland metro area, which pick up food that is then re-distributed to vulnerable populations served by these agencies, including homeless persons, at-risk youth, and families without transport to pick up items from BCS themselves. BCS does not track information on clientele of these agencies, though a recent BCS survey of the numbers served weekly by these agencies resulted in a rough estimate of 5,000-10,000.

5. Is this organization a public, private non-profit, or private for-profit entity?

Private non-profit.

6. From what federal agency and account are you requesting funds (Please be specific –e.g., Department of Housing and Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives account)?

Agriculture or Labor-HHS-Education

7. Briefly describe the activity or project for which funding is requested (please keep to 500 words or less.)

BCS requests funding for a three-pronged initiative that would more effectively and efficiently implement its current operations directly serving low income families and providing to other social-service programs in the Portland/Vancouver metro area with: a) an expanded adult education program (AEP) providing more instruction to more families in money management / financial literacy, computer skills/bookkeeping, job-search skills, community gardening and low-cost cooking; b) improvements to our system for safely transporting food from product donors to re-distribution areas at our warehouse; and c) support of means to maintain diversity of wholesome, nutritious food to families at risk of obesity and other health problems from diets typical of those having limited food options.

In the current economic climate, the need for our programs is particularly urgent. The working-poor families served by BCS have a critical need for the tools to achieve financial stability as soon as possible. BCS has determined from its 17 years of serving low income families that many of their financial problems are due to poor financial decisions, which in turn are caused by a lack of basic financial literacy. Appropriations funding will enable us to expand our AEP, which provides instruction in skills that will help families hit hardest by the recession to weather the financial difficulties while at the same time honing their job-search and resume-writing skills in order to alleviate their unemployment/underemployment. A new initiative in the AEP is community gardening, which with more resources we would be able to avail to more of our families.

As Oregon has one of the highest rates of marginal food security, compared to the U.S. average, it can be expected that a substantial portion of families are at risk of health and developmental problems due to food instability in their households. Research strongly suggests that obesity and weight gain are most problematic in households with low food security, which report that—rather than eating less—they reduce the quality and variety of their diets to avoid having to reduce the amount they eat in order to avoid hunger. BCS has the capacity to store and distribute larger quantities of high-quality fresh and perishable foods (such as fresh produce) with our expanded warehouse cooler. BCS has had a continuing increase in product donations from a growing number of donors, largely because BCS has a sterling reputation for same-day pickup of goods from donors who must move surplus inventory from their warehouses quickly or send it to landfills. Although the product donors who regularly give to BCS would greatly prefer that their surplus product be put to a good purpose, they will not deliver the donated product to BCS. If BCS cannot pick up the products offered by donors (usually within 24 hours of being called by these donors), the products will be taken to landfills and added to the increasing levels of waste from our growing communities. One of our refrigerated trucks is old and in need of replacing—a new truck, plus improvements in our warehouse, would significantly increase our capacity for transporting more high-quality food to our warehouse, safely unloading and re-packaging it, and finally moving it onto the distribution floor in the warehouse from where hundreds of families and scores of agencies (many that pick up product for distribution in food pantries around the region) select the food that best meets their particular needs.

8. What is the purpose of the project? Why is it a valuable use of taxpayer funds? How will the project support efforts to improve the economy and create jobs in Oregon?

The purpose of the project is to help families in financial crisis in the Portland metro region to avoid foreclosure, bankruptcy, and eviction and to regain financial stability by expanding services that will:

- Shift financial attitudes of low income families from the role of “debtor / consumer” towards that of “responsible planner;”
- Prepare participants to take control of their financial future and be accountable for their daily financial decisions;
- Equip participants with the skills they will need to move away from the brink of economic crisis into the mainstream of financial self-sufficiency.

Through a combination of a) a more efficient program of re-distribution of food/clothing/household items, b) an expanded education program, and c) a more comprehensive system of family support BCS will leverage taxpayer funds in order to attain the following outcomes:

- A. At least 1,800 families will benefit directly from BCS programs, first through access to distribution of wholesome food and secondly through access to education and community-gardening programs.
- B. At least 400 families will complete at least one AEP workshop or class during the course of the project year, and, of those who complete a workshop or class and participate for at least 18 months in the BCS redistribution program:
 - At least 90% (360 families) will report capability to keep a frugal household budget;
 - At least 45% (180 families) will show at least a 10% increase in their household income;
 - At least 40% (160 families) will show an increase in savings on hand, and of those 90% (145 families) will at least double their savings (from a minimum of \$100); and
 - At least 35% (140 families) will show at least a 10% reduction in monthly debt payments on non-mortgage debt(s).

By preventing additional families from falling into crisis and subsequent reliance on government and private social-service programs, this project will ensure that these families retain their viability in the state's workforce and as responsible consumers and homeowners/renters. Their productive role in the state's economy will facilitate the economic recovery over the next two years.

9. Has this project received federal appropriations funding in past fiscal years?

No.

9a. If yes, please provide the fiscal year, Department, Account, and funding amount of any previous funding.

Funding Details

10. Amount requested for this project: \$ 184,752

11. Breakdown/budget of the amount you are requesting for this project (e.g., salary \$40,000; computer \$3,000):

FoodSmart / MoneySmart Initiative (Jan. 2011-Dec. 2012)

a. Personnel:

1) Contracted instructors for Adult Education Program:

- Good \$ Sense: (\$1,680 per course x 8) \$ 13,440
- Computer Skills (Word & Excel): (\$175 per session x 16) 2,800
- Quicken: (\$200 per session x 16) 1,600
- Success at Work: (\$100 per session x 12) 1,200
- Cooking on a Budget (\$200 per session x 6) 600
- Community Gardening 1,200

2) Child care: Appx. \$470/course (Good \$ Sense sessions only) x 8 3,760

3) Administrative Support (\$448/month x 24) 10,752

Subtotal \$ 35,352

b. Equipment

- 26,000 Gross Vehicle Weight refrigerated truck \$ 87,500
- Dock seals and shields at truck loading bay (safety improvement) 5,500

Subtotal \$ 93,000

c. Supplies

Fuel (1,000 miles/month @ 10 mpg x \$3.00/gallon) x 24) \$ 7,200

d. Capital Improvements: Clean room reflooring in warehouse \$ 4,300

e. Other:

- Freight charges (transport free frozen chicken from Pilgrim's Pride:
\$4000/load x 8 loads) \$ 32,000

- Insurance (for truck): 2,500

- Truck maintenance (\$200/mo) x 12: \$2,400 28,800

Subtotal \$ 63,300

12. What is the total cost of the project? \$ 203,152

13. Is this project scalable (i.e., If partial funding is awarded, will the organization still be able to use the funds in FY 2011?)?

This project is scalable to the extent that fewer AEP classes and workshops could be provided, and fewer pickups could be made by the new truck; however, such a reduction in the program would also mean less families and agencies being served.

14. What other funding sources (local, regional, state) are contributing to this project or activity? (Please be specific about funding sources and funding amounts)

The Autzen and Jackson Foundations (with grants of \$5,000 each) and the Providence Community Benefit Fund (with a grant of \$8,400) have contributed toward the \$32,000 in truck freight charges required for transporting several tons of donated frozen chicken during the biennium. Thus this request for appropriations is \$18,400 less than the total project cost.

15. Please list public or private organizations that have supported/endorsed this project.

Please return this form no later than Friday, February 26, 2010 via email to:

Appropriations.Blumenauer@mail.house.gov

Washington, D.C. Appropriations Contact for Rep. Earl Blumenauer: Stephanie Cappa, 202-225-4811, Stephanie.Cappa@mail.house.gov

Oregon Appropriations Contact for Rep. Earl Blumenauer: Sarah Masterson, 503-231-2300, Sarah.Masterson@mail.house.gov